

Gloucester
Natchez, Miss.

17-5
H.A.B.S. No. ~~Miss. 45~~
HABS
MISS.
1. Natchez

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Mississippi

Historic American Buildings Survey
A. Hays Town, District Officer
Jackson, Miss.

17-5
H.A.B.S. No. Miss-45

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GLOUCESTER
NEAR Natchez, Adams County, MississippiOwner (Or Custodian)

Mr. and Mrs. Lennox Stanton

Date of Erection

1800

ArchitectBuilderPresent Condition

Good

Number of Stories

Two story

Materials of ConstructionFoundation

Brick

FloorsExterior WallsInterior WallsRoofOther Existing RecordsAdditional Data

Gloucester is situated on the Natchez tracts, and was at one time the home of Winthrop Sergeant, first territorial Governor of Mississippi. Has brick outside chimneys, double halls with front cross hall.

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G L O U C E S T E R

Near Natchez Adams County Mississippi
Located on the Lower Woodville Road
Once a part of the Natchez Trace

The color of "Gloucester" is exactly right for its semi-tropical setting. The dark red brick, dull green blinds and aged white woodwork and stuccoed columns, blend into an undescrivable picture. It is easy to understand that a few years later builders of "Rosalie" and "Arlington" had difficulty expressing their own originality, with such an inspiration so close at hand.

.Either the designer of "Gloucester" was a Spanish builder, or he had made an intensive study of the earlier examples around Natchez, for certainly the house shows great Spanish colonial influence in both plan and detail. The major body of the house is only one room deep; and the beautiful entrance portion, with its impressive columns, its graceful pediment and spider web elliptical window, serves as galleries for communication.

.The steps lead up the center bay of the colonnade, but do not lead to a central "through" hall as do all of the houses of the period which follows; instead there are two doors, just alike in design, behind each end bay of the four columns, leading to separate stair halls. On the first floor the designer has provided a passage from one hall to the other, but on the upper floor it would be necessary to go through a bedroom to cross over, or use the gallery as access.

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.The basement under the entire area, is full height on the rear and lighted by a broad areaway on the front and sides. There was a wrought iron fence on the area wall at one time. The basement was used for a kitchen and general service.

.Another interesting feature of the house is the way the end room walls are treated; their corners are diagonally cut, making an oblong octagon out of the main lines of the house. At some early date after the house was built galleries were added across the rear. This work was well done, but strangely enough, there was no regard for equal spacing of the five tall stuccoed brick columns which were added. On each end of these galleries small brick-ed in rooms were added the full three stories high. This addition made the general plan very much more livable. In recent years a tiny wood kitchen has been added.

.The interior is interesting in detail. Most all of the mouldings are similar to the early Spanish details. The mantels are especially fine. The library mantel is of Adam design, is white marble bodied with colored Italian marble inlaid panels, and hand carved marble corner inserts. Still all of this fine detail seems unimportant and is apt to be overlooked even by Architectural students, for the walls are literally covered by enormous oil paintings, some by the old masters, and the library shelves are filled with rare editions of fine books. All of the furniture is the finest of the period.

.Most all of the buildings of the early estate are intact and are in good repair. On the site is the family grave yard in which Winthrop Sargent is buried.

.In all, "Gloucester," with its history, its architecture, paintings, library, and furnishings is one of Mississippi's most interesting places.

G L O U C E S T E R

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The lands on which this old house stands were granted to Jacob Winifrey by the English Government in 1773. Winifrey was a veteran of the Colonial wars and once "held a commission under General John Forbes." Winifrey became a leading spirit in the Natchez revolt of 1781. As result of this his property was seized in the name of his most "Catholic Majesty," and sold at public auction. An early deed to Nathaniel Tomlinson says in part: - "Sold to the highest bidder, all that tract of land seized and confiscated as the property of Jacob Winifrey, containing a small dwelling house, tobacco house and barn, at public sale in the year 1782," signed -- Carlos de Grandpre.

.The Tomlinson heirs sold the place to Samuel C. Young in 1803, the sum named being six thousand five hundred dollars. It is generally stated that he started the building of "Gloucester" the same year and named it "Bellevue". A few years later he lost the place due to the foreclosure of a twenty thousand dollar mortgage.

.Winthrop Sargent, first territorial governor of Mississippi, acquired the place from Abijah Hunt on May 30, 1808, the sum involved being twenty thousand. The record described this place as: "all that tract and parcel of land purchased by Samuel Young from Nathaniel Tomlinson, commonly known by the name of "Bellevue;" together with all houses, out-houses, edifices, buildings and barns." It was the last mentioned owner who re-named the estate in honor of his native city.

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.In time Mr. Sargent made a large fortune and married a rich widow, Mrs. Maria McIntosh Williams, who had four children. From one of the latter descended the great actress, Mrs. Cora Brown Potter, whose memoirs very recently appeared in the Cosmopolitan. After living at "Gloucester" a number of years, Major Sargent died in 1820.

.During the Federal occupancy of Natchez, which followed the fall of Vicksburg, George Sargent, son of Winthrop Sargent, was shot by two members of the Union Troops on the rear porch of "Gloucester." Living residents, only a short time since, were able to recall the execution of these two men on the grounds of "D'Evereux."

.Following this, Colonel James C. Wilkins became the owner of "Gloucester" and spent much time and money in improvements. In 1877 it was sold by Mrs. Jane Percy Duncan to James Surget, the last male descendant of Pierre Surget, an early citizen of the Spanish era. He founded a vast fortune and his family soon became very influential. The men of the family were noted sportsmen.

.Mr. James Surget's widow still owns "Gloucester", and spends much of her time there.